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UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Somebody's Wish List?

On the systemwide Academic Senate's website, there is a document addressed to Provost and EVP Katherine Newman titled "Characteristics of Undergraduate Educational Quality at the University of California." I'm sure a lot of work went into producing it, but it sure seems like somebody's wish list. Excerpt:

...UC Quality: Expected Outcomes. Graduates of UC will have the ability to:

• Weigh evidence critically and think independently.

• Demonstrate integrity and principled leadership.

• Simultaneously hold multiple narratives in mind.

• Communicate effectively using skills in rhetorical writing with clarity of thought.

• Assess information for accuracy and trustworthiness.

• Make intellectual and creative contributions that serve the public good in California, the nation, and the world.

• Succeed in subsequent study and other postgraduate scholarly activities.

• Make professional contributions in their chosen field, informed by their experience in a research-oriented academic environment, with undergraduates contributing to the creation of new knowledge with opportunities to work at the very cutting edge of theory and practice.

• Apply the breadth and depth of their education, readily adapting to and taking advantage of rapid changes and evolutions in knowledge, technology, and social paradigms.

Source: https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/reports/undergradaute-educational-quality-statement-2024.pdf.

All these characteristics would be nice to have. Could anyone disagree on such goals? But where's the action item?

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UC

Things to Consider

Anyone who reads the news will be aware of the difficult climate that higher education institutions are likely to be facing in the future, given political realities. Although UC resides in a so-called blue state, it will not be exempt from such pressures. Indeed, it may be *more* of a target precisely because of its location. Moreover, the use of technology in instruction, broadly defined and uncertain as to future developments, raises some unique issues for faculty welfare, as do immediate concerns about the cost of living in the LA area.

At UCLA, there has long been a north campus/south campus divide as well as a professional school/general education divide. Involved here are standards of evaluation and promotion for faculty and differing remuneration systems and labor market conditions. The various Academic Senate mechanisms that have evolved attempt to deal with these divides. (I speak as a former chair of CAP, the Senate committee that reviews all promotions, tenure hires, etc., across these divides.) But there are budgetary and other pressures that are likely to widen the divisions.

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- Common Systemwide Calendar Workgroup
- UCSA's Letter Asking UC to Expand Commitment to Vulnerable Populations
- UC President Search Committee Statement
- Faculty File Historic Academic Freedom Unfair Labor Practice Charges Against UC
- Union Letter to UC with Benefits Demands

Remaking the University

- Liner Note 14: Michael Burawoy and the Future of Knowledge - 2/7/2025
- Why I Walked Out of the MLA for Good--And Why You Should Too (Guest Post) - 1/28/2025
- Highlights 11: Morons of the Master Race - 1/26/2025

Higher Ed. News & Commentary

- Chronicle of Higher Education
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- UCLA Faculty Association
- UCSB Faculty Association
- UCSC Faculty Association
- UCB Faculty Association
- Council of UC Faculty Associations

Other Faculty Organizations

- American Association of University Professors
- California Faculty Association (NEA)
- UC-AFT

Topics

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Political pressures at the state level are pushing for ever-increasing undergraduate enrollments. The legislature is sensitive to complaints from constituents about why their kids didn't get into the UC of their choice. They know there is a prestige associated with UC admission. But what produces that prestige is not large enrollments but research. That contradiction is not well understood in the political world. Administrators, pressed to make larger enrollments happen, look to the above-mentioned technology to make it possible. They also increasingly seek to rely on cheaper "temps" - nontenured instructors and graduate assistants - to accommodate more students.

But since the unionization and major strike of grad students, these substitute instructors are not as cheap as they once were. So teaching via technology becomes the default fix. And with technology comes questions about who owns the "intellectual property" of recorded lectures, for example. Is it the faculty member who produced them? Or the university as employer? Note that Regents often come from the private sector where if you make something for your employer, the employer owns it.

These forces are the long-run, and maybe not-so-long-run, realities that will be affecting faculty welfare in the future. For junior faculty there are immediate issues such as the high cost of childcare and - at UCLA - the ability to access the primary and secondary schools run by the university. At UCLA, the high cost of housing is a major issue in recruitment. (And the current wildfires - by taking much property off the market - will aggravate the cost of the remaining housing stock.) What kind of housing assistance will be available?

As members of the Faculty Association will know, there is currently an election going on for board members. This blog obviously takes no position on individual candidates. But we do suggest that voters consider the issues raised above in making their selections. Who will best address the coming and present challenges facing faculty welfare? Since the Academic Senate has tended to be the forum in which such challenges are handled by faculty - both at the campus and systemwide levels - who will serve on Senate committees, such as Faculty Welfare, despite the time commitments involved? Who will keep up with nitty-gritty issues such as the cost of UC-provided health insurance or the funding of the pension system?

Dealing with the issues above focuses on concerns that unite faculty.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Faculty Association at UCLA, UC Regents, UCLA

Monday, January 13, 2025

Something's Happening

Yours truly received the notice below from the UC-Irvine Academic Senate, but it refers to a systemwide Senate meeting. I won't provide the Zoom link since only Senate members can attend:

Systemwide Academic Senate Chair Cheung received a letter signed by over twenty-five voting members of the Academic Senate requesting a Special Meeting of the Assembly to discuss the following topics:

1. *The lack of consultation for implementing the Information Security Investment Plan and the potential negative effects of the plan on faculty's research, teaching, and merits and promotions.*
2. *UCOP's differential treatment of faculty and administrators regarding compensation and cost-of-living adjustments.*
3. *The University of California's continued decrease in percent contribution to medical plans.*

In accordance with Senate Bylaw 110.A.3.c, a special Assembly meeting has been scheduled for Friday, January 17, 2025, from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

Systemwide Assembly meetings are open exclusively to Academic Senate members and invited guests.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 11:09 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, UC, UC-Irvine

Help for UC Fire Victims

Emergency resources from UC's benefit plans

- Replacing lost prescriptions
- Replacing lost documents
- Seeking medical, dental or vision care
- Emotional health support
- Claims for loss of life or property, disability
- Legal resources to help you recover

(277) UC enrollment (276) enrollment (248) UC-San Diego (235) community colleges (231) LAO (214) UC-Irvine (177) fund raising (161) UC-Santa Cruz (147) UC-Santa Barbara (146) UC-San Francisco (144) controller (137) faculty center (136) ballot propositions (132) UC-Riverside (131) CalPERS (120) faculty pay (104) UC-Merced (103) Master Plan (102) Yudof (89) UCRS retirement (60) Faculty Association at UCLA (59) parking (59) privatization (59) CalSTRS (50) UC Berkeley (33) copyright (30) campus climate survey (28) UCRS (21) Michigan Model (18) UC Merced (17) uc funding (16) State Contribution (14) UCOF (14) Regents (13) faculty recruitment (12) UC pay (7) graduate education (6) UC San Diego (5) UCpolitics (3) teaching evaluation (3) UC Irvine (2) UC Santa Cruz (2)

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► 2011 (738)

Posted by California Policy Issues at 10:49 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, UC

Town Halls on the Fires

From an email received last night:

Dear Bruin Community:

Our hearts are heavy as we continue to see the devastation caused by the fires throughout L.A. County. So many in the Bruin community have been impacted by loss and uncertainty, and have been processing the tremendous destruction and suffering we have all seen in our region. UCLA emergency personnel and health care workers — many of whom have experienced their own losses — have been working around the clock to serve our campus and the broader region. We are grateful to everyone in our community who is helping those in need.

As we continue to confront the impacts of the fires, we invite you to join a **series of virtual UCLA Town Halls** to learn more about our fire planning, hear from campus leaders and get answers to your questions:

- **Monday, Jan. 13 at 1 p.m. – Town Hall for Faculty and Staff**
  - Hosted by Administrative Vice Chancellor Michael J. Beck
  - Will include representatives from Academic Personnel, Academic Senate, Campus Human Resources, Research & Creative Activities, UCLA Health
- **Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 3 p.m. – Town Hall for Students**
  - Hosted by Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Monroe Gorden, Jr.
  - Will include representatives from Academic Affairs, Administration, Dean of Students, Housing, Residential Life
- **Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 5:30 p.m. – Town Hall for Parents**
  - Hosted by Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Monroe Gorden, Jr. and leaders from Alumni Affairs
  - Will include representatives from Student Affairs, Alumni Affairs, Undergraduate Education, Administration
- **Thursday, Jan. 16 at 10 a.m. – All-Campus Town Hall with Chancellor Frenk**
  - Will include representatives from across UCLA

Speakers for each Town Hall will continue to be added to their individual registration pages. **Each Town Hall has an individual link for registration. Please be sure to register to receive Zoom information at one of the links above.** When you register, you will have an opportunity to send questions ahead of time. If you are unable to attend, recordings will be available after the Town Halls.

We also want to ensure you know about the many resources available to you. We created a campus updates and resources page which centralizes resources for students and employees, messages from leadership, the latest information on the status of campus operations and answers to frequently asked questions.

► 2010 (431)
► 2009 (12)

Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

We look forward to engaging with you at a Town Hall this week. We will get through this difficult time together. Remember, we are one UCLA.

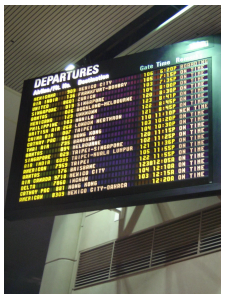
Sincerely,

Julio Frenk
Chancellor

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:53 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

A Departure



In the past, when the UC budget has been squeezed, the UC president and the Regents tend to express thanks to the governor for his generous proposal in Hard Times (and then lobby for more at the legislature). This year, in response to the budget proposal we discussed yesterday, President Drake - in a departure from the past - has expressed distress. As we noted, the budget for UC is basically flat in nominal terms and so is a cut in real (inflation-adjusted) terms.

But Drake himself is soon to depart so maybe he has decided to abandon caution:

UC statement on Gov. Newsom's 2025-26 state budget proposal

UC Office of the President, January 10, 2025

University of California President Michael V. Drake, M.D., today (Jan. 10) issued the following statement on Gov. Gavin Newsom's proposed 2025-26 budget:

The University of California, the UC Board of Regents, the Governor, and the Legislature share a commitment to excellence in California higher education. Over the past several years, we have worked together to achieve the shared goals outlined in our multiyear budget Compact, including greater access, affordability, and student success. I appreciate Gov. Newsom's continued interest in higher education and the success of our students.

At a time when the University is enrolling record numbers of California students, I am concerned about the impact of the proposed $271 million funding reduction on our students and campus services. I look forward to our continued collaboration with the Legislature and the Governor throughout the budget process to mitigate any harmful budget impacts. With stable state support, the University can continue to invest in California's students, our state's economic growth, and the leading-edge research needed to address some of the world's most pressing challenges.

Source: https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-statement-gov-newsoms-2025-26-state-budget-proposal.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: Drake, governor, politics, State Budget, UC budget crisis

Good Chemistry

From the Bruin: *Students raised over $15,000 to support a chemistry senior lecturer who lost his home to the Los Angeles wildfires. Laurence Lavelle announced in a Thursday classwide email that he lost his home, adding that the only clothes he owns are the ones he wore to work the previous day... However, the senior lecturer said in an email to the class that he declined the monetary donations, adding that he already appreciates the overwhelming student support he has received...*

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2025/01/11/students-show-support-for-ucla-professor-who-loses-home-to-los-angeles-fires.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

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